

Appl. No. 10/701,845  
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### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior listings and versions of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended): ~~A method~~ Method for preparing a concentrated inoculating composition for use with leguminous plants, ~~based on a sterilized and cooled general use culture medium, which comprises~~ comprising the following steps ~~for treating the culture medium in the order given:~~

- a) ~~The general use~~ a culture medium suitable for supporting the growth of Rhizobium Japonicum bacteria is sterilized and cooled;
  - b) Rhizobium Japonicum bacteria is added to the culture medium and allowed to multiply for 46 hours at a temperature preferably of 28 C;
  - c) The result of the two previous steps is cooled to a temperature of 10 or 11 C;
  - d) ~~characterized by the addition to the general use culture medium treated in the way explained in steps a)-c)~~ of a solution comprising powdered maltose saccharide, and liquid maltose saccharide, lactose saccharide, and as well as a fungicide called potassium sorbate is added to the combined culture medium and bacteria, said solution being prepared by ~~in accordance with the following steps:~~
- 1) dissolving said powdered maltose saccharide, said liquid maltose saccharide, and said potassium sorbate in 100 liters of water;

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- 2) Sterilization at 121 C for 30 minutes;
- 3) Cooling to 20 C.

2. (Currently Amended): The method Method for preparing a concentrated inoculating composition as described in claim 1, ~~characterized in that it also further comprising~~ comprises the step of incorporating, prior to step a), 5 to 20% peat by weight which has been treated in accordance with the following steps:

- I) Heating the peat with distilled water at 100 C for forty minutes;
- II) Transferring 10% of the final volume of the peat of step I to a fermenting unit where the culture medium is to be prepared and where are added the rest of the chemicals which comprise the ~~general use~~ culture medium;
- III) Adjusting the pH to between about 6.9 to about 7.0.

3. (Currently Amended): A concentrated inoculating composition for use with leguminous plants, ~~comprising the general use culture medium obtained with produced by the method described in claim 1, characterized in that said inoculation composition comprises powdered maltose, liquid maltose and lactose saccharides as well as the fungicide potassium sorbate.~~

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4. (Currently Amended): A composition as described in claim 3, characterized in that it comprises by weight 5 to 20% thereof peat previously treated in accordance with the following steps:

- I) Heating the peat with distilled water at 100 C for forty minutes;
- II) Transferring 10% of the peat of step I in the final volume to the fermenting unit where the culture medium is to be prepared and where are added the rest of the chemicals which comprise the ~~general use~~ culture medium;
- III) Adjusting the pH to between about 6.9 to about 7.0.